INTERGOVERNMENTAL DATA QUALITY TASK FORCE

OVERVIEW:

In the fall of 1997 the Environmental Protection Agency's Federal Facilities Restoration and Reuse Office convened the first meeting of an Intergovernmental Data Quality Task Force (IDQTF). Comprised of EPA (headquarters and Regions), Department of Defense, and Department of Energy representatives, the focus of the IDQTF is to comprehensively address a myriad of problems and issues related to the management of environmental data quality at Federal facilities. The purpose of this fact sheet is to request comment on four IDQTF work products:

- Federal Quality Systems Roles and Responsibilities Guidance, Appendix G to the *Uniform Federal Policy for Implementing Environmental Quality Systems* (UFP-QS)
- *Uniform Federal Policy for Quality Assurance Project Plans* (UFP-QAPP)
    - Part 1, UFP-QAPP Manual
    - Part 2A, QAPP Workbook
    - Part 2B, *QA/QC Compendium: Minimum QA/QC Activities*

MISSION AND GOALS:

The consensus mission of the IDQTF is **"To document an intergovernmental quality system beginning with the hazardous waste programs."** Relying on definitions contained in the American National Standards Institute, *American Society for Quality Control standard, Specifications and Guidelines for Environmental Data Collection and Environmental Technology Programs* (ANSI/ASCQ E4), the task force agreed that, although the intergovernmental quality system should be comprehensive and cover all environmental programs; it will focus its initial efforts on the hazardous waste programs managed by the Office of Solid Waste and

Emergency Response. However, other EPA offices will be encouraged to participate in the IDQTF so that the applicability of task force work products can be expanded to other programs.

The task force identified three initial goals to accomplish its mission:

- *To develop a written agreement on what constitutes an adequate QA program;*
- *To develop a guidance/framework that outlines the roles and responsibilities of the EPA (headquarters and regions) and the Federal facilities with regard to QA/QC oversight; and*
- *To develop guidance for implementing Federal agency-wide requirements and procedures regarding data quality.*

PRODUCT STATUS:

- *Uniform Federal Policy for Implementing Environmental Quality Systems* **(Status: Signed by OSWER AA, DoD and DOE; January 2003).** Based on Part A of ANSI/ASCQ E4, this policy outlines the requirements for a quality system that must be addressed by all departments and agencies that agree to develop a quality system consistent with this policy.
- ☐ *Federal Quality Systems Roles and Responsibilities Guidance* **(Status: Review Draft Appendix G to UFP-QS; August 2003).** The guidance outlines the continuing role of the IDQTF in developing and implementing an intergovernmental quality system, as well as the roles

and responsibilities of the participating agencies or organizations.

☐ ***Uniform Federal Policy for Quality Assurance Project Plans* (Status: Review Draft; August 2003).** This guidance document is designed to fulfill the project-specific requirements of Part B of ANSI/ASCQ E4, to ensure that Federal departments and agencies will produce consistent quality assurance project plans (QAPPs) that reflect a systematic planning approach to collection and use of environmental data.

☐ **Part 1, UFP-QAPP Manual,** contains instructions for the preparation of QAPPs for managing environmental data collection and use. It emphasizes a team-based and graded approach. Text boxes throughout the manual illustrate the use of the graded approach. Section 5.0, Data Review, introduces expanded definitions for verification, validation, and usability assessment, beyond current practice. Field sampling data should be reviewed as well as analytical data, validation includes comparison to criteria identified in the QAPP, and a true usability assessment, based on project-specific data needs, is required for all environmental project phases and data uses.

☐ Part 2 consists of supplementary materials to assist in implementation of the Manual. **Part 2A, QAPP Workbook,** contains fill-in-the-blank worksheets to be used when writing a QAPP in order to ensure the specific requirements of the Manual have been addressed. Use of the worksheets is optional but they are expected to streamline review of QAPPs by regulators and others. **Part 2B,** *QA/QC Compendium: Minimum QA/QC Activities,* outlines minimum required QA/QC measures to be included in QAPPs written for all CERCLA projects. The activities begin with project planning, continuing through data review, and are organized by project phase. Certain traditional QC samples are not minimum requirements since the IDQTF does not believe they contribute to the evaluation of data quality. Although developed for the CERCLA process, these minimum activities may be applicable to other programs where environmental data are collected and used.

COMMENTS REQUESTED:

The IDQTF requests comments on all four of the review draft documents. Specific areas of interest include:

- The usefulness of the level of detail of the roles and responsibilities guidance
- The new definitions for the data review steps
- The optional QAPP worksheets
- The usability of the UFP-QAPP Manual for small, focused projects
- The specific minimum QA/QC requirements for CERCLA projects

COMMENTS ON THE REVIEW DRAFT DOCUMENTS MUST BE RECEIVED BY JANUARY 15, 2004.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

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